



# AUSTRALIA



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

E-mail [australia@un.int](mailto:australia@un.int)

150 East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, New York NY 10017-5612 Ph 212 - 351 6600 Fax 212 - 351 6610 [www.AustraliaUN.org](http://www.AustraliaUN.org)

## UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY FIRST COMMITTEE

26 October 2015

### Conventional Weapons

#### Statement by John Quinn, Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva and Ambassador for Disarmament

---

Mr Chairman,

Over the past year we have seen encouraging forward movement in conventional weapons control. Notably, the Arms Trade Treaty has entered into force and some 120 states, along with regional organisations, civil society and industry groups came together for a successful First Conference of States Parties in Cancun in August this year.

Australia, collaborating closely with Ghana, co-facilitated the adoption of financial rules for the Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat and Conference which will contribute to establishing a strong, effective and efficient framework for the Treaty's implementation.

Australia continues to promote the universalisation of the treaty. We welcome the Pacific island nation of Tuvalu as the newest state party. Australia continues to work closely in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond encourage wide accession and strong implementation of the Treaty, announcing recently a further 400,000 Australian dollars to assist with ATT implementation.

We have also contributed 2.2 million Australian dollars to the UN Trust Facility for Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR). UNSCAR provided funding for the recently released report on *Arms and Ammunition in Oceania*. The Australian Mission will host a side-event tomorrow on this initiative.

Mr Chairman,

Small arms and light weapons continue to pose a grave threat to civilians, to peacekeepers, to humanitarian workers and to civil society organisations. Australia remains firmly committed to curbing this threat through implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2117, adoption of which Australia helped secure as Council President in 2013.

There is growing global awareness of the gravity of violence to individuals and communities caused or facilitated by weapons misuse. Australia strengthened our regulation of the private use of firearms in 1996. The results are measurably clear in reducing of homicides and suicides in our community. Australia looks forward to the recommendations of the Chair's summary report from the Second Open-Ended Meeting of Government Experts under Programme of Action being taken forward at next year's Sixth Biennial Meeting of States.

Australia remains committed to all protocols of the CCW. We strongly support the need for continued international effort to reduce the suffering caused by inhumane weapons. We encourage sharing and demonstration of best practice use of all legal weapons, so that civilian casualties are minimised. All states must also be held to their obligations to uphold international humanitarian law.

As a core supporter of the Mine Ban Convention, Australia congratulates Mozambique on the landmark achievement of final total clearance of remaining anti-personnel landmines in that country. We see an urgent need for renewed international commitment to the Mine Ban Convention. It is also vital for states parties to pay their financial dues. Australia has been pleased to be a key contributor to the Mine Ban Convention's voluntary Sponsorship Programme, which helps mine-affected States to send representatives to the meetings of the Convention.

Australia continues to play a constructive role in the international effort to eliminate Cluster Munitions, as a party to the relevant Convention. We were pleased to participate in the first Review Conference of the Convention in Dubrovnik in September, and to see the adoption of the Dubrovnik Action Plan. Australia continues to make a particular contribution to the work of implementation of the Convention through our role as Co-coordinator on Victim Assistance for 2015-16.

Australia will continue to play a very significant role in sharing the burden of clearance of land mines, unexploded ordinance and other explosive remnants of war in contaminated areas across the world, with a particular focus on our Pacific neighbourhood is an ongoing Australian priority.

Mr Chairman,

In conclusion, let me affirm that Australia takes seriously the threat posed by the proliferation and misuse of conventional arms. We are all diminished by violence, which hampers development and threatens our stability, security and well-being. Addressing these challenges require a common commitment and vision to reduce the scourge of armed violence.

I thank you, Mr Chairman.